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REMARKS

Claims – Amendments to Correct Informalities

Claims 1 was amended to change "sealing position" to "blocking position" to provide proper antecedent basis for the terms contained in later claims.

Claims – Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1 to 4, 6, 9 to 12 and 14 were rejected as being anticipated by Gebhard (US Patent 5,431,205). Claims 7, 8, 15 and 16 were rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gebhard in view of Donzella (US Patent 5,743,294). The claims have been amended to differentiate over the cited references and favorable reconsideration is requested in this regard.

In particular, with respect to claim 1, neither Gebhard nor Donzella, alone or in combination teach or suggest a plunger for blocking air flow through an air supply passage and which is operable by applying force by a feed tube spike against a drive end of the plunger. Thus, claim 1 is now believed to patentably distinguish over the cited prior art.

With respect to claim 9 it is noted that neither Gebhard nor Donzella, alone or in combination teach or suggest a plunger for blocking air flow through an air supply passage and which is axially moveable along a bore to block and open the air supply passage. Thus, claim 9 is also now believed to patentably distinguish over the cited prior art.

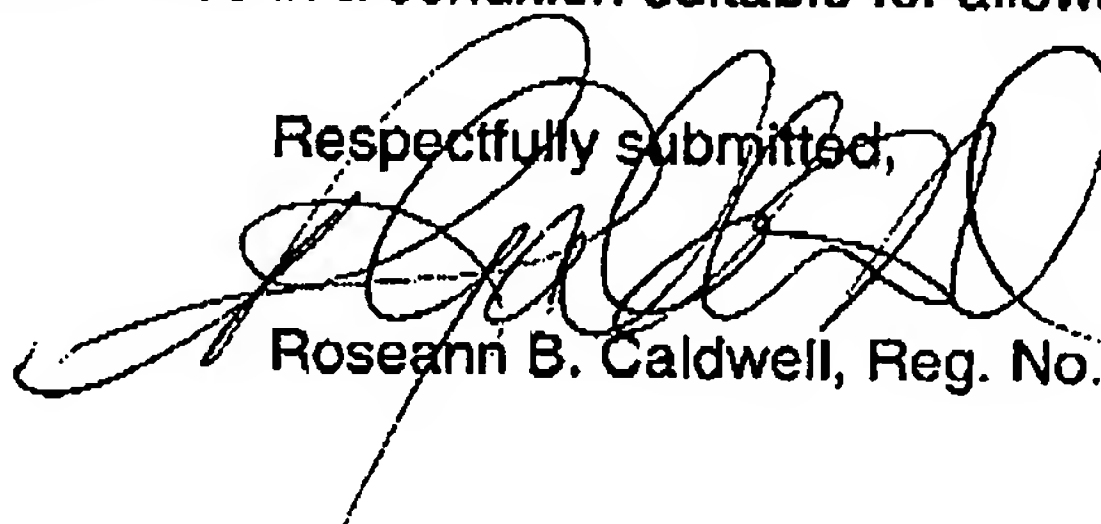
New Claims

New claims 33 to 42 have been added to define further aspects of the present invention. These claims clearly differentiate over the cited prior art.

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Applicant has addressed all of the matters raised in the office action and the claims of the application are believed to be in a condition suitable for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: Dec 6/05

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